

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY
PCT
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY
(Chapter II of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

REC'D 10 OCT 2005

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Applicant's or agent's file reference URC046BWO	FOR FURTHER ACTION	
See Form PCT/IPEA/416		
International application No. PCT/EP2004/005377	International filing date (day/month/year) 19.05.2004	Priority date (day/month/year) 26.06.2003
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC B01J2/16, B01J8/28		
Applicant UREA CASALE S.A.		

1. This report is the International preliminary examination report, established by this International Preliminary Examining Authority under Article 35 and transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.
2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.
3. This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, comprising:
 - a. (*sent to the applicant and to the International Bureau*) a total of sheets, as follows:
 - sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis of this report and/or sheets containing rectifications authorized by this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions).
 - sheets which supersede earlier sheets, but which this Authority considers contain an amendment that goes beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed, as indicated in Item 4 of Box No. I and the Supplemental Box.
 - b. (*sent to the International Bureau only*) a total of (indicate type and number of electronic carrier(s)), containing a sequence listing and/or tables related thereto, in computer readable form only, as indicated in the Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing (see Section 802 of the Administrative Instructions).

4. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- Box No. II Priority
- Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 21.12.2004	Date of completion of this report 07.10.2005
Name and mailing address of the International preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office - Gitschner Str. 103 D-10958 Berlin Tel. +49 30 25901 - 0 Fax: +49 30 25901 - 840	Authorized Officer Cubas Alcaraz, J Telephone No. +49 30 25901-324



INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.
PCT/EP2004/005377

Box No. I Basis of the report

- With regard to the **language**, this report is based on the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
 - This report is based on translations from the original language into the following language, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of:
 - international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b))
 - publication of the international application (under Rule 12.4)
 - international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3)
 - With regard to the **elements*** of the international application, this report is based on (*replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report*):

Description, Pages

1-10 as originally filed

Claims, Numbers.

1-7 as originally filed

Drawings, Sheets

1/2-2/2 as originally filed

- a sequence listing and/or any related table(s) - see Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing

3. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:
 the description, pages
 the claims, Nos.
 the drawings, sheets/figs
 the sequence listing (*specify*):
 any table(s) related to sequence listing (*specify*):

4. This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments annexed to this report and listed below had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).
 the description, pages
 the claims, Nos.
 the drawings, sheets/figs
 the sequence listing (*specify*):
 any table(s) related to sequence listing (*specify*):

* If item 4 applies, some or all of these sheets may be marked "superseded."

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT
ON PATENTABILITY**

International application No.
PCT/EP2004/005377

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1-7
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	1-7
	No: Claims	
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-7
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7):

see separate sheet

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
REPORT ON PATENTABILITY
(SEPARATE SHEET)**

International application No.
PCT/EP2004/005377

Re Item V

Reasoned statement with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

Reference is made to the following document:

D1: US-A-2635684

The document D1, which is regarded as being the closest prior art to the subject-matter of claim 1, shows (col. 2, line 38-col. 3, line 17; figure) a granulation process comprising prilling of a molten substance and cooling the granules using two fluid beds. One single gas stream is used for fluidizing the beds and drying the droplets of molten substance.

The subject-matter of claim 1 differs from this known process in that the granules are prepared also in a fluid bed.

The subject-matter of claim 1 is therefore new (Article 33(2) PCT).

The problem to be solved by the present invention may be regarded as to provide a fluid bed granulation process with controlled temperature and a reduced energy consumption.

The solution to this problem proposed in claim 1 of the present application is considered as involving an inventive step (Article 33(3) PCT) for the following reasons:

The use of the whole fluidizing gas in the cooling bed as fluidizing gas for the granulation bed improves the control of the temperature in the fluid bed, which is a critical feature of the granulation process using a fluid bed, without requiring an external heating gas stream, because the cooling gas leaving the cooling fluid bed has an increased temperature.

Similar reasoning applies to the independent claim 3.

Claims 2 and 4-7 are dependent on claims 1 and 3 and as such also meet the requirements of the PCT with respect to novelty and inventive step.